

Session 1

Critical Advocacy for Higher Education

Moderator: Kirin Macapugay (California Commission on Asian Pacific Islander Affairs Higher Education Committee)

Panelists:

- Dr. Karen Umemoto (UCLA Asian American Studies Center)
- Dr. Rowena M. Tomaneng (San Jose City College)
- Abigail Catalano Chun (UCLA Asian American Studies Center)

Policy Reactor: Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi (California Asian American & Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus)

1. Dr. Rowena M Tomaneng:

- Speaking on behalf of Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education
- APAHE dedicated to enhance educational opportunities for Asian and Pacific American students and was founded in struggle
- We must collaborate with other communities in order to truly break through systemic struggles
- Good News:
 - 59% percent of AA ages 25-64 not including NHPI Californians have a bachelor's degree or higher (a rate that has grown for all but four groups within the larger communities)
 - Graduation rates for AA students enrolled in UC are highest among any racial or ethnic group, with 88% of AA UC undergraduates graduating in six years and all subgroups within the UC's Asian American student body maintain six year grad rates over 80%
 - Enrollment of AA and NHPIs at CSU and UC held steady between 2019 and 2021 despite COVID-19
 - Following reforms to remedial education placement policies at the CCC's the percentage of students enrolling in pre-transfer coursework has dropped for all AA from 18% to 13% and 25% to 17% for NHPI
- Not So Good News:
 - only 22% NHPI Californians between ages of 25 and 64 have a bachelor's degree one of the lowest rates among all racial/ethnic groups in the state
 - In the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic, AA and NHPI enrollment at the CCCC plummeted by 20%.
 - Only 10% NHPI transfer students enrolled in a UC Campus fall in 2019, while over a 27% enrolled in a private, for profit institution

2. Foundations & Futures. An Asian American Pacific Islander Multimedia Textbook; Dr. Karen Umemoto & Abigail Catalano

Chun:

- Ethnic studies is caught in the crosshair of politics with people calling for the banning of books that discuss critical topics in addition to the attacks on Critical Race Theory
- We are concerned for all lives, and have the right of free discovery. The right to discuss Ethnic studies, LGBTQ studies, Palestine, it is important to defend rights that we are fairly secure are now up in the air.
- The new California legislation requires all public high schools, community colleges, and Cal state universities to have an ethnic studies requirement, however there is little material freely available for teachers
- As such, UCLA AASC has been granted funding and the ability to be making a textbook on Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies
 - Full launch in 2025 with a preview event on Saturday May 11th 2024 9AM - 12PM at 700 S Mariposa Ave in Koreatown (tinyurl.com/aapimt)
 - Textbook will be open access. Most comprehensive open anthology available for free for hs and college students. There are 5 key goals that textbook is developed around

- Build foundational understanding about Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in US territories and larger diaspora
- Develop skills to communicate understand engage and articulate
- Nurture critical thinking and inquiry on fundamental assumptions and structures of power and inequality
- Cultivate holistic well being amongst all land connections across difference
- Develop solidarity

3. Assemblymember Muratsuchi:

- Important to bring together the policy and politics because having the politics means having the power to bring the policy together
- The \$150 million API Equity Budget was in large part a better reflection of better budget times in recent years and because Assemblymember Phil Ting was the assembly budget chair
- Long term strategy is to educate everyone in America about our communities and history
- In terms of the policy initiatives, the first starting point is the budget. Do we have money to support these programs like the ANNAPISI designated schools?
 - Professor Umemoto talked about implementation and resources of the textbook. Looking at the 73 billion dollar budget deficit, it seems very hard to make big changes due to that.
 - We want to ensure that we roll out the ethnic studies graduation requirement successfully
 - For UCLA to have a textbook that is not profit driven teaching about AAPI communities is huge and we want to continue supporting that given there is a big industry these national textbooks have and power to determine what is taught in the classroom

Questions for Assemblymember Muratsuchi:

“What type of strategies, issues, campaigns, make them more equitable with more solidarity with other groups? Other recommendations on how we can work in solidarity with other groups?”

- Ensuring we work with the overall Ethnic studies movement. We are in solidarity with the Latino, African American, Native communities
- Encourage universities to continue to collectively push that agenda together
- In terms of budget situation, as all of you, California has a history of boom and busts cycle, what goes down must eventually come up.
- We are increasingly talking about bonds as an alternative to the state general funds.

Open Questions:

- “In a time when South Asian, SWANA, and especially Palestinian students are being attacked for exercising their first amendment rights to assemble and protest, what can be done on a policy level to protect these students?”

Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi

- Very difficult issue and times we are facing with the Israel-Hamas War
- In my district representing South of LAX, I have heard both from both
- Students from Arab, Muslim, and Jewish have expressed to me they don't feel comfortable to be themselves
- I think we need to provide safe space for all students whether it is Palestinian students and Jewish students

Kirin Macapugay:

- Faculty and students should have the ability of freedom of expression

- Education spaces have to be the safest spaces possible to make sure they are being implemented safe and we should ensure the policy people of these districts are adhering to them

Dr. Karen Umemoto:

- A lot of people don't realize how Palestine is part of the API region
- Educators need to do better and think about being more supportive

Dr. Rowena M. Tomaneng:

- Both academic and students have rights for expression
- In education space, we do need to keep encouraging those type of teach-ins, with moderated faculty and students on how they are feeling
- Institutions are not engaging in the internal education work so that folks understand the complexities of conflict in the region which make it very difficult to move forward in doing so

Abigail Catalano Chun:

- One of the important things in the [AAPI Multimedia] textbook is to teach concept theory and synthesize it to historical and contemporary events
 - Relating it personally to those who have family members who were incarcerated in WWII and seeing it being replicated and amplified in the Palestine conflict
 - Thinking about how land management has weaponized communities and encourages students to apply frameworks to their own lives and own world
- “How has UCLA attracted students to join the ethnic studies program?”

Answers:

Dr. Karen Umemoto

- Lots of STEM students wish they had taken their first Asian American Studies course sooner
- Movement building approach with word by mouth and outreach programs

Kirin Macapugay & Abigail Catalano Chun

- Thinking about what the possibilities are being an ethnic studies major
- Students do not know what Asian American Studies really means which is another challenge

END OF NOTES

Higher education what does that mean? How cross sector collaboration are coming together to make sure we pass initiatives that positively impact our students and communities. First, we are going to here about our historic program, ethnic studies initiative, some of the issues that effect our AANAPHISI. Hear from Muratsuchi who will share us insights as a legislator.

Dr. Rowena M Tomaneng

- Thank you so much Karen and good morning to everyone. On behalf of Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education. Next conference we have in Oakland in April is annual conference. APAHE is dedicated to enhancing educational opportunities for Asian and Pacific American students; APAHE founded in struggle. Founded in 1987 during height of a five-year fight against a series of discriminatory admission policy directed against AAPI applicants at UC Berkeley. Conference on admission fight in Oakland, CA, participants decided to form organization that would address issues affecting AAPI students, staff, faculty, and administrators in 2 and 4 year administration. For education space, we do hold an annual conference. This year's conference we have close to 1300 higher education practitioners. We join our MSI such as HSI, HBCU, and Tribal Colleges and Universities in that effort
- Advancement and building Pipeline 2nd mission: The COALITION's Aspiring Radical Leadership Institute: Aims to create radical educators who promote issues of equity and race, to deconstruct and dismantle structural racism. LEAP Advance. We must collaborate with other communities in order to truly break through systemic struggles
- AANHPI Students in California Community colleges and universities (the good news): 59% percent of AA ages 25-64 not including NHPI Californians have a bachelor's degree or higher (a rate that has grown for all but four groups within the larger communities). Graduation rates for AA students enrolled in UC are highest among any racial or ethnic group, with 88% of AA UC undergraduates graduating in six years and all subgroups within the UC's Asian American student body maintain six year grad rates over 80% Enrollment of AA and NHPIs at CSU and UC held steady between 2019 and 2021 despite COVID-19. Following reforms to remedial education placement policies at the CCC's the percentage of students enrolling in pre-transfer coursework has dropped for all AA from 18% to 13% and 25% to 17% for NHPI
- Not so good news: only 22% NHPI Californians between ages of 25 and 64 have a bachelor's degree one of the lowest rates among all racial/ethnic groups in the state
- In the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic, AA and NHPI enrollment at the CCCC plummeted by 20%. Only 10% NHPI transfer students enrolled in a UC Campus fall in 2019, while over a 27% enrolled in a private, for profit institution. 4-year high school grad rate for NHPI students enrolling in 2017 was 82% with less than half 44% of graduates

completing the A-G Curriculum necessary for CSU and UC eligibility.

- In the California budget 2022-2023 Governor Newsom and the state legislature make investment of \$8 million on going to CCCC and 8 million on going to CSU to create central offices and disseminate funds to AANAPISI-eligible CCC and CSU colleges to serve. California Ed Code Section 79510 and Sec 89297 for authorize each respective college systems to improve
- In 2019, meetings began with AAPI legislative Caucus members to discuss funding limitations of the AANAPISI program, to make CA to make investment in underserved and low-income AANHPI students. Team Comp: Tim Fong Sac State, Nathan Dietrich Sac State, Cirian Villavicencio San Joaquin Delta and CAPIAA, Rowena Tomaneng, APAHE San Jose City College. California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs and the commissions Higher Education Committee Advisory Board partnered and mobilized with over 89 CCC and CSU institutions. Partnership: AAPILC, LEAP, Commission on API Affairs, TAF, Campaign for College opportunity, Lead Filipino, AAPITA, The Coalition. We are at 50 right now AANAPISI, do not include UC schools right now
- Lowest funding minority serving programs. Incentivize data disaggregation and dissemination among AANAPISIs

- Increase funding for AANAPISI program at Dept. Education from 78 million to 100 million. Remove the multiple MSI barrier and increase federal funding for MSI collaborations. Develop federal policies to better support AA & NHPI communities.

Foundations & Futures. An Asian American Pacific Islander Multimedia Textbook Karen and Abigail

Karen:

- We will be hiring 8 FTE faculty PI. Also making a student resource center because of Gene Block initiative
- Start by talking about the policy environment. Policy environment within which we pursue ethnic studies today. It is caught in the crosshair of politics with calls to have book bans. Over 130 book bans across the country. Just between July 22 and June 23, over 150 titles have been targeted. Attacks on CRT have generally attacked Since September 2022 on the issue race alone, there have been 137 bills, statement letters, attacking CRT. There have been condemnations for people who support Palestine. We are concerned for all lives, and have the right of free discovery. The right to discuss ethnic studies, LGBTQ studies, Palestine, it is important to defend rights that we are fairly secure are now up in the air. Ethnic Studies and call for education that reflects our communities. Now over 50 years of ethnic studies and institutions like departments and AAPI Nexus and centers that bridge academic and community. Work together. We are poised to take advantage of a unique opportunity. New legislation that requires all public hs, community colleges, and Cal state universities, for ethnic studies requirement. Rob Bonta has been a champion for ethnic studies requirement in legislation. There is little material freely available for teachers. Only 2% of teachers throughout the country are of AAPI descent. In California alone, we are 700 teachers short in our ability who are trained in ethnic studies pedagogy by 2029-2030. There is no guarantee anyone will learn anything with fidelity. We have made it accessible and easy to integrate into their classroom

Abigail:

- Showing the textbook. Launched with 50 chapters, that have topics and themes dedicated to specific culture. Peer reviewed and quality reviewed. Shelf ready and corresponding lesson plans. Example: Japanese Wartime Incarceration. "Can the rights of an entire group of people be violated in a democracy?". Each textbook is separated by 5-6 modules. An entire chapter should last an a week of lessons. Today, we are focusing on Module 1 of the chapter. Wasn't a while when I was in a HS classroom, I still did not see myself in the culture we talked about in the classroom. This was limiting as it was white centered. Ethnic Studies ppl see as an impractical study. But it is one of the most important to the future and has proven time over time why it exists. What does the future hold if students are able to show what an equitable future and how they approach one another look like?
- Recommendations
 1. Support development of educational resources on Asian American and Pacific

- Islanders like the multimedia textbook for k-12 teacher and college instructors
2. Continue to be advocate to ensure proper implementation of ethnic studies graduation requirements taught by qualified teachers
 3. Fund teacher training provided by those qualified in Asian American and Ethnic Studies pedagogy
 4. Protect teachers who teach Ethnic Studies from defamation

Preview Event:

Saturday May 11th 9AM-12pm UCLA community school RFK community school 700 S Mariposa Ave Koreatown

Preview first chapter of this free online digital textbook. Full launch in 2025 Check out website at tinyurl.com/aapimt

Moderator:

- In order to achieve anything, we have to bring together the policy and politics. Having the politics means having the power to bring the policy together. There have been lots of talk about the API Equity Budget \$150 million. And that is in large part a reflection of better budget times in recent years where we had budget surplus but we had Phil Ting as the assembly budget chair. The intersection between policy goals that we advocate for and the politics. We can't achieve policy goals without empowering communities collectively would not have gotten that budget if Phil was not the chair of the budget committee. First and foremost when we talk about policy, we must remember the political empower of our collectively agenda. The ethnic studies movement started in the 1968 3rd world student strike at SFSU, to have opportunity to support and establish ethnic studies graduate has to know, that is one of the most game changing initiatives that is taking place in the education space. The long-term strategy is to education Americans about our communities and history. The many initiatives prek-12 certificate. Critical teacher shortage throughout the board, but especially more communities of color as teachers

Wanted to highlight:

- Measure budget and policy initiatives, first starting point is the budget. Do we have money to support these programs like the ANNAPISI. Professor Umemoto talked about implementation and resources of the textbook. Looking at a 73 billion dollar budget deficit, very hard to make big changes due to that. What is the long game for making sure we roll out ethnic studies graduation requirement successfully. The multimedia textbook is well on the way to making it available for all school districts. Working in the education policy space, it is a big industry these national textbooks have and power to determine what is taught in the classroom. For UCLA to have a textbook that is not profit driven teaching about AAPI communities is huge and want to continue to support that
- Question 1: "What type of strategies, issues, campaigns, make them more equitable with more solidarity with other groups? Other recommendations on how we can work in solidarity with other groups?"
 - Certainly again working with the ethnic studies movement. Not just AAPI, we are in solidarity with the Latino, African American, Native community our histories are taught. Encourage universities to continue to collectively push that agenda together. In terms of budget situation, as all of you, California has a history of boom and busts cycle, what goes down must eventually come up. The high school graduation requirement is a long term requirement when the budget improves.

Like with any initiative, any private dollars or philanthropic dollars, there is major and homelessness, climate change, fixing our schools. We are increasingly talking about bonds as an alternative to the state general funds. Lead author on the education bond K-14 education bond that is going on for school facilities

- Not programs or teacher training. Those are the initial thoughts of the other approaches
- Question 2: “Do you have recommendations anything that we should consider when we are refining our outcomes, initiatives?”
 - The importance of working with other communities to advance common goals. In addition to what I initially talked about. Going back to what I said initially, the earlier work that UCLA and all of you have been doing. We know what our communities need. How do we get the support necessary to implement it? Having that representation where policy and politics need to go hand in hand. How do each of our schools and districts implement that graduation requirement. Schools are given broad discretion. State are the biggest funder for biggest schools. The commitment to teach ethnic studies properly. That goes back to having diverse teachers, admins, electing community representatives to our board districts. When LA community college district. Keep the focus on policy but can’t keep the policy without the politic

- Question 3: “What can South Asian students and Palestinian students who want to support them?”

Al: Happy to start off. So, this is a very difficult issue and times we are facing with the Israel-Hamas War. In my district representing South of LA Airport, have heard both from Palestinian Constitutes as far as they both feel threaten, such as Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia have spike. Students from Arab, Muslim, and Jewish communities are all sentiments where they don’t feel comfortable to be themselves. I think we need to we are providing safe space for all students whether it is Palestinian students and Jewish students

Mod: Faculty and students are freedom of expression. Education spaces have to the safest space possible to make sure they are being implemented safe. Familiarizing with the policy people of those districts are adhering to them

Karen: A lot of people don’t realize how Palestine as part of the API region. Educators need to do better and think about being more supportive

Purple: Doing the reminders for our district. Both academic freedom and student rights for expression. In the education space, we do need to keep encouraging those type of teach-ins, with moderated faculty and students on how they are feeling. Institutions are not engaging in the internal education work so that folks understand the complexities of conflict in the region, it is very difficult to move forward in doing so

Abigail: One of the important things in the textbook is to teach concept theory and synthesize it to historical and contemporary events. How these events are connected. Personally, we have members who are incarcerated to family members in WWII, are being replicated and amplified in the Palestine conflict. How land management has weaponized communities and encourages students to apply frameworks to their own lives and own world

- Question 4: “How has UCLA attracted students to join the ethnic studies program?”

Karen: I wish I had taken my first Asian American Studies sooner my stem students say. Have movement building approach to do word by mouth and outreach programs.

Purple: Having the ethnic studies requirement to introduce what are the possible benefits of being an ethnic studies major when you go to a 4-year college. Through the collaboration of our policy-makers, we have a revised streamline CAL-GETC. Leverage power of whats happened in terms of legislation and encourage students to pursue it as a major,

Mod: What are the possibilities with being an ethnic studies major? Ethnic studies is still new

to parents, can lead to education.

Abigail: Another challenge is understanding what Asian American means as some students do not know what that really means. It is a space that is true to the ideals that were set out and inclusive

Community Questions:

- Savana Lee UC Irvine: One of 2 schools as AANAPPISI school. Always rejected because UCI is already a HSI. What are any advice or what are some advocacy tools can work with this issue?

Kirin A Macapugay: You cannot be both

Dr. Rowena Tomaneng: You can be both in terms of embracing that. Difficulty is that the federal funding engagement. We are doing more work around the minority serving institutions. If you receive a Part A category, you can receive a different Part category. We need to work together an increase in funding as well

- Question: MT Sac College: ANNAPISI; We talked about the 2% teacher are API. What kind of policy for Pacific Islander students especially in terms of Inland Empire and HealthCare?

Al: As well all know, in the given proposition 209 has continued to say that we can not have race based targeted programs to focus on Pacific Islander population

Karen: We have to be creative because of 209, for example, the 8 faculty we are doing recruitment for, half are going to be in South Campus and North Campus. The need for Pacific Islander faculty in schools of engineering, medicine, we can't hire based on people who they are. We are looking for students who are able to mentor these students and takes a lot of creativity and determination and commitment. Can help support one another

Dr. Rowena: Possibly engaging our foundation partners. Be more intentional and working with foundation partners and scholarship based support

Researchers:

- What communities does this research and policy address?
- What is the problem and the proposed solution?
- How does the speaker pitch the urgency and necessity of their policy?

Community Reactors:

- How does their work fit into or contribute to the proposed policy and research?
- What is their response to the research and policy/programmatic recommendations?

Policy Reactors:

- In order to achieve anything, we have to bring together the policy and politics
- Having the politics means having the power to bring the policy together
- Regarding the policy proposals, it is important to consider the budget the state has. Given the 73 billion dollar budget deficit at the time of this conference, it seems very hard to make big changes due to that.
- Important to think about the long game of figuring out how we roll out Ethnic Studies graduation requirements successfully

Action Discussion:

- How do panelists and audience members react to the policy presentations and panelist responses?
 - Concerns, receptiveness, support
 - Recommendations/suggestions, follow-up questions
 - Possible strategies for change
 - Advantages of certain policy alternatives
 - Resources required for change to be implemented
 - Short- and long- term plan of action
 - Roles of different stakeholders in advancing recommendations
- How would various stakeholders use the research in order to build collaborative relations and coordinate future action?
- Next steps